1: Federal W-5 (no date) 1986
NN23 Sea Islanders NN23
Georgia

764 [761] tings, den duh udduhs in duh fambly will die too. Dey will folluh right long. Folks alluz hab two fewnuls. We hab one wen dey die an den once a yeah we hab a suhvice fuh ebrybody wut died durin duh yeah.[42] Duh preachuh say a prayuh fuhrum all."

795 From this source we obtained added verification of the fact that river baptisms were still held.

[783] [782] "We alluz baptize on duh ebb tide," said Rosa. "Duh watuh washes duh sin away. Duh preachuh pray up on duh bank an den wen he baptize duh candidate, he pray tuh duh ribbuh tuh take away duh sins."[43]

527 Later in the conversation the women recalled harvest festivals[38] that had been held many years before. "Dat wuz alluz a big time." Anna's rather somber face lit up at the remembrance of the festive occasion. "Ebrybody bring some ub duh fus crop tuh duh chuch an we prepeahs a big [782] feas. We pray an gib tanks fuh duh crop an pray fuh duh nex yeah. We all eat an sing an dance. One uh duh dances [535] call duh Buzzud Lope.[17] We still dance dat tuhday."

115 Rosa told us proudly that she was a granddaughter of Katherine Basden who had been recognized as a leader among [554] the Negroes in the section.

"Me an muh brudduh wuz muh granmudduh's favorites," she said. "She alluz said she lak us bettuhn all duh udduh chillun. Wen I wuz only bout twelve yeahs ole, she tell me wen I grow up I would take huh place an carry on duh wuk she wuz doin."

[533] Moving her powerful shoulders in rhythm and clapping her hands together, the woman sang us a song that her grandmother had crooned to new-born babies as she held them in her arms. The words were, for the most part, indistinguishable. Over and over we caught one repeated phrase, "nikki yimi, nikki yimi."

[763] "Muh granmudduh wuz took very sick. She knew she wuz gonuh die. Dat wuz jis wen muh oldes chile wuz bawn.

2: Jones-Jackson L-5 (1973-1986) 1987
NN23 Sea Islanders NN23
South Carolina

Notes

Preface

1. For a note on the usefulness of interdisciplinary approaches see David DeCamp, "Toward a Generative Analysis of a Post-Creole Speech Continuum," in *Pidginization and Creolization of Languages*, ed. Dell Hymes (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1971), p. 369.

2. For a detailed discussion of field procedures in general see Kenneth Goldstein, *A Guide for Field Workers in Folklore* (Hatboro, N.C.: Folklore Assoc., 1964).

3. See ibid., p. 21.

4. Juanita Jackson, Sabra Slaughter, and J. Herman Blake, "The Sea Islands as a Cultural Resource," *Black Scholar*, March 1974, pp. 32–39.

5. For further discussion of entrance into Sea Island communities see Patricia Nichols, "Linguistic Change in Gullah: Sex, Age, and Mobility" (Ph.D. diss., Stanford University, 1976).

6. Goldstein, *Guide for Field Workers*, p. 173.

Introduction

1. The titles *Mr.* and *Miss* have more significance in Sea Island communities than they do outside. They are used in daily interaction with those who are felt to have earned particular respect, becoming part of their names.

2. See Lorenzo D. Turner, *Africanisms in the Gullah Dialect* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1949), pp. 11–12.

Chapter 1

1. Jackson, Slaughter, and Blake, "The Sea Islands as a Cultural Resource," p. 32.

2. These estimates were derived primarily from the Berkeley-Charleston-Dorchester (BCD) Council of Governments' *Report on Economically Less Developed Areas in the Berkeley Charleston Dorchester Region*, 1980.

3. For a detailed discussion of the folk life and language of Sandy Island and the

[P. 169]

2: Jones-Jackson L-5 (1973-1986) 1987
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protective coating like Ber Cooter. He cannot fly like Ber Buzzard or remain aloof on a high perch like the owl. His only defense is his wit, and his wit he puts to good use in the tales told about him on the Sea Islands. Knowing his habits well, perhaps the islanders find him more deserving of the titles "trister" and "sporty little animal" than any of the other animals they come in contact with.

36. The islanders' interactions with the natural environment go beyond the economic. The children become amateur oceanographers and learn to foretell the weather by the humidity and color of the sun at given times of the day, and the manner in which it sets in the evening. They learn to gauge time within minutes in a furrowed field by counting the number of rows that a shadow covers at certain times of the day, as well as by the distance of the sun as it moves from "day clean"—sunrise—to "out the light"—sunset. "Island time" is important because the inhabitants fish, crab, and shrimp only when the tide reaches certain levels coming in or going out. Water is a subject of much symbolism among the older islanders. Once one has partaken of the Sea Island water, one is thought to have a right to live on the islands. But as I was informed, in no uncertain terms, the water must be *offered* by an older, native-born member of high social esteem for that right to be legitimized.

37. On this point see, for example, Joyner, *Down by the Riverside*, pp. 61–63.

38. Winifred Owens (personal communication).

39. Mary Arnold Twining, "An Examination of African Retention in the Folk Culture of the South Carolina and Georgia Sea Islands" (Ph.D. diss., Indiana University, 1977), p. 175.

40. Ibid.; Owens (personal communication).

41. Greg Day, *South Carolina Low Country Coil Baskets* (Charleston, S.C.: Charleston Communication Center, n.d.).

42. Jackson, Slaughter, and Blake, "The Sea Islands as a Cultural Resource," p. 37.

43. William Demerson (Bamidele Ade Agbasebe), *The Role of Wife in The Black Extended Family: Perspectives from a Rural Community in the Southern United States*, New Research on Women and Sex Roles (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Center for Continuing Education of Women, 1974), p. 135. Demerson is an anthropologist who has spent several years in the Sea Island area.

44. Ibid., p. 130.

45. Ibid., p. 135.

46. For further discussion see Joyner, *Down by the Riverside*, pp. 141–63, especially p. 144.

47. W. D. Weatherford, *The Negro from Africa to America* (1924; reprint, New York: Negro Universities Press, 1969), p. 44.

48. See John S. Mbiti, *African Religions and Philosophy* (New York: Doubleday and Co., Anchor Books, 1970), p. 209.

49. Quoted in Patricia Jones-Jackson, "The Status of Gullah: An Investigation of Convergent Processes" (Ph.D. diss., University of Michigan, 1978), p. 134. See also Appendix 3 herein.

50. Georgia Writers Project, *Drums and Shadows*, p. 236.

51. Crum, for example, does not acknowledge the influence of African languages

3; Creel H-4 (no date) 1988
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appointment," wrote Botume. "Sometimes two men claimed the same woman, whilst she coquetted not a little, evidently disposed to take the one that bid the highest." But, Botume added that this "rarely if ever" occurred when children were involved.[74]

Although the Committee on Discipline within Baptist churches operated as a religious tribunal, efforts to use Christianity to control the Gullahs was largely unsuccessful. Nevertheless, Gullahs seemed almost unanimously to prefer religious affiliation through Baptist membership rather than Methodist. Methodist missionaries displayed a more sincere and human interest in the slaves than their sometimes ruthless, Puritan-oriented Baptist masters. "This seems to be a very unpromising portion of our field of labor," wrote one Methodist missionary, "all owing to the prejudices of the negroes." He continued:

> We cannot . . . find fault with the negroes in this portion of our mission field, for preferring another communion to our own; but our voice will ever be lifted against them, for refusing the bread of life, because, forsooth it comes not to them on a silver salver, or from the hands of one who has not "gone down into or come up out of the water."[75]

The ceremonious manner in which Baptists initiated converts into church fellowship impressed the Gullahs. Also, despite Calvinist orientation, Baptists were nonheirarchial, worship was less formal, and church structure less legalistic. But, such considerations were not as significant in influencing Gullah acceptance of the Baptist denomination as were other factors. Baptists slaves exercised a religious autonomy the Methodists would not hear of, and this, coupled with the fact that Sea Island slavery was a quasi-absentee type, contributed to the Gullahs' opportunity to control their own religion, to a point. Moreover, in their endeavor to keep blacks under civil control and to keep them on the plantations, slaveholders allowed spiritual permissiveness by legitimizing already existing black societies and leaving them in the hands of black leaders with only minimal white supervision.[76]

The extent to which spiritual autonomy influenced Gullah culture and social organization is most evident in the prominence of black leadership. Baptist planters recommended black watchmen who were supposedly "tried and true," and slaveholders apparently had great confidence in those chosen. Such elders were usually staunch church members, but also influential and respected in the quarters. Methodist missionaries were skep-

3: Creel H-4 (no date) 1988
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code of the society could be imposed upon leaders by society members. The zo were the principal characters in the society, and were charged with protecting the traditions and institutions of the group. The zo people had a "majestic status." They were respected by chiefs and elders, and "honored with intense devotion by the youth of the land." In personal characteristics a zo was "chivalrous, courteous, public spirited, law-abiding and fearless." The zo was also a teacher of "native lore, arts, and crafts." He or she had full knowledge of the history and traditions of the people. Above all, the zo were "authentic" judges of all matters pertaining to the people's welfare.[26]

As role models these African leaders correspond to some extent with Gullah elders. But there is an even closer relation between zo and Gullah spiritual parents to whom the slaves looked for guidance and who maintained such "absolute authority" over them. Laura Towne wrote:

> I went to-day to see Maum Katie, an old African woman who remembers worshipping her own gods in Africa but who has been nearly a century in this country. She is bright and talkative, a great "spiritual mother," a fortune teller, or rather prophetess, and a woman of tremendous influence over her spiritual children.

Similarly, Harriet Ware was acquainted with "Old Peggy, the 'leader' from Fripp Point." Ware was told that "Old Peggy and Binah" were the two "whom all that came into the Church, had come through, and the Church supports (takes care of) them." Thus the Methodist missionary correctly assessed the role and power of women diviners in Gullah church membership. A further example of female influence in the sacred-secular world of slaves is provided by Francis Kemble. An old woman on the Butler plantations named Sinda, reigned as a prophetess among the slaves for many years and acquired as ascendency over them. When she declared the world would soon end, "her assertion took such possession of the people on the estate that they refused to work, and the rice and cotton fields were threatened with an indefinite fallow in consequence of this strike on the part of the cultivators." The overseer, realizing the impossibility of attempting force, waited until the appointed day arrived. Sinda' prediction proved false and no emancipation was forthcoming. The people went back to work and Sinda, in a fallen state, was "tremendously flogged."[27]

It is difficult to discern where one type of socioreligious leadership

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began among the Gullahs and the other ended, or if in slavery a shared authority and governance was practiced. Among Windward Coast Africans authority rested with two bodies—the chief and his elders, and cultural authority, which consisted of Poro and Sande leaders. The latter was called the Poro Council. "All grave and problematic questions touching the interest of the section or tribe in general were handled by this Poro Council, and their decisions, after due deliberation, were preemptory." Among the BaKongo, governance was far more centralized and hierarchical. Authority was in the hands of a king, and on the village level, a chief, who might have advisers, among whom was a medicine man (*Nganga Nkisi*).[28] But the importance of the priest in all African societies may explain the continued presence of the spiritual parents. Because spiritual parents, like their African counterparts, held their positions for life, and since they comprised the "religious court," they possibly represented the communal soul of the people while the elder personified the individual soul in a more Christian context. From the spiritual leader a Gullah candidate not only received religious guidance but also instruction in conduct or "manners," thus preserving values as well as maintaining authority. Different social conditions make it impossible to actually compare types of instruction given to African and Gullah initiates. But in both situations such qualities as good conduct, allegiance, generosity, and group responsibility were emphasized. Secret society initiates received a rich background in physical survival, social interaction, instruction in ethnic-group history, and art. They were also schooled in their particular occupation for the future. For Gullah "seekers," instruction was probably a mixture of Christianity, Africanisms, and practical information. Candidates were taught how to pray, an interpretation of the nature of God and Christ, concepts about death, and especially about the realities of life, all within a context relevant to their circumstances as bondspeople.[29]

When African initiates left the bush, they returned to the village as "reborn," and were said to have "crossed the water." Their former existence was obliterated—old animosities, debts, even crimes no longer existed. The person was entering a new life with new responsibilities. Neophytes were expected to take their place in the village, to serve it when called upon, and to obey its regulations as interpreted by the Poro Council. When initiates were led back to the village, they underwent a washing ceremony in the creek or river. After "washing," new members were dressed up for their final return. Parents publicly expressed pride

4: Carawan & Carawan B,Z-5 (1959-1988) 1989
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South Carolina
Johns Island

Mr. Abraham Jenkins

I'LL GIVE YOU AN EXAMPLE OF PEOPLE WHO REALLY MADE A DIFFERENCE IN THESE ISLANDS

Sometimes people don't recognize the hard work of people behind the scenes. I'll give you an example of people who really made a difference in these islands. Mrs. Alleen Brewer Wood came to Johns Island in 1929. Her husband, Rev. Brewer, was the pastor of two churches on the island. She was quite a community person. She would help with anything that needed doing. These were the days when people depended on root medicine and midwifery, what I call indirect health care. It was not the approved method of health care, but people had their own methods for taking care of problems. Mrs. Wood was around in that time when we were trying to get people to feel better about themselves, and trying to teach them about self-respect. She was one of the persons that we call the "grandmoms of the islands," instrumental in so many little things that you don't hear that much about. She helped lay down some of the foundation for the projects that came to Johns Island. Later on she taught the Citizenship School classes on Edisto.

Rev. McKinley Washington was one of those people that my daddy really relied on. He would call him up every Sunday morning before church and talk over with him the things he would like to see discussed in church—voter registration or whatever the issue was. He was just a young minister in those days, right out of school. He started the NAACP here. And later they formed a group from the Presbyterian church called the Self-Development of People to deal with the needs of people on Edisto. They bought an old school building (used to be the school for the white kids) and used it as a community building.

When Esau was working through the Charleston Citizens' Committee, which took in all of the sea islands, Rev. Washington was his connection for Edisto and Yonges islands. People were always reluctant about how fast to move to bring about change. They will go with you for awhile, but then if it looks like you're not giving up, some will want to put the brakes on. So Esau had to have people that would keep that motivation going. And McKinley was one of those people. He's a real good speaker. His voice is deep and heavy, and when he starts preaching, you have to listen to him. So my daddy used him as an inspirator.

When Rev. Willis Goodwin came to Johns Island to pastor in 1966, people just looked on the ministry as church on Sunday. When Rev. Goodwin got here he changed all that. His ministry was seven days per week. He would go around to the people who were sick or were in need—and everybody was in

4: Carawan & Carawan B,Z-5 (1959-1988) 1989
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need for something. He tried to find out what he could do to help. He would go around to the piccolo joints and talk to people, and go down to the fishermen and talk to them, go to the growers and talk to them. After awhile he didn't have to buy anything for the people. He was getting everything donated. Once people saw that they could depend on him, then he started getting into the social issues. That's when he started working with my daddy. Then they would call in McKinley and some of these other people, and they would brainstorm about the problems. To me, Rev. Goodwin did more for people on these islands, especially from the pulpit, than anyone since my daddy.

41 Carawan & Carawan B,Z-5 (1959-1988) 1989
NN23 Sea Islanders NN23
South Carolina
Johns Island

Mr. William Saunders

I'M PRETTY BITTER ABOUT THINGS LIKE THAT

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I've been thinking about Mrs. Septima Clark. Here's a person who got fired from a system after teaching over thirty years for belonging to an organization that she would not denounce (NAACP). They refused to give her even her retirement. That same system, that same power base, allows her fifteen, twenty years later to be on the school board. That same power base turns around later on and says, "You can have your retirement." And that same power base is saying, the mayor is saying, the governor is saying, "This woman is a hero." There's something wrong with that!

Those power brokers can say, "At eighty years old we can make you a hero; we can line your wall with plaques, because you're no more threat to us." And the reason we can make you a hero is that now we got to look out for Bill Saunders and them that is coming along. And they're the ones that's going to give us some trouble. And as new people come along, then some of us become worthless, so we get plaques and stuff.

When the superintendent of the school system for the state can say, on the morning that Mrs. Clark dies, that there's nothing wrong with our school system, we got a perfect school system, there's no bias, there's no problem, and that will go. And then the judge turns around and says yes, the only problem is poverty and it will take fifty to a hundred years to straighten that out, and then they say Mrs. Clark is a hero. The mayor says, "There's nobody like her. She never got loud, she never raised her voice, she's sweet, and she got things done. We loved her." I'm pretty bitter about things like that.

4: Carawan & Carawan B,2-5 (1959-1988) 1989
NN23 Sea Islanders NN23
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Mrs. Bernice Robinson

EVERYBODY LISTENED WHEN ESAU TALKED

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Esau did not get the kind of recognition he deserved for the work he did. He spearheaded so many things: the Charleston County Citizens' Committee, the Credit Union (and it was countywide, which is very unusual), the Comprehensive Health Center on Johns Island. He would be really proud if he was alive today to know that they got the nursing home and the senior citizens' home. He fought like anything to get the health clinic on the island so they could have medical care for the people over there.

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While he was living, he didn't get that much praise. But it didn't daunt his efforts at all. His children suffered a lot for him being so aggressive. They couldn't get jobs in Charleston County. But he still wouldn't let that turn him around. He continued to fight for what he thought was right for his people.

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Esau didn't finish his high school education until after he'd gotten married. There were a lot of people, professionals or educators, who felt that if he changed the way he talked, it would be so much better. But I used to say, "Everybody listens when Esau talks in his same Gullah language." He was telling it like it is, and they heard what he was saying. You would think that with the exposure he had, and with him going all around the country, some of it would rub off. I don't think he wanted it to rub off. He maintained his speech as it was. So he had criticism from a lot of the educated folk, but he was saying what they needed to be saying. And he got the benefits for them.

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He would have a whole lot to say about education. He would be very disappointed about how far we still have to go, but he wouldn't be bitter about it. He would be saying that we haven't accomplished yet what we need to accomplish. And he would see in what way he could work to bring it about.

4: Carawan & Carawan B,Z-5 (1959-1988) 1989
NN23 Sea Islanders NN23
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Johns Island

Mr. Gerald Mackey

BLACK YOUTH NEED POSITIVE ROLE MODELS

156 Many of the problems that young people face—substance abuse, teenage pregnancy, illiteracy, suicide attempts—are a direct result of these young people having a poor self-image and low self-esteem. So the first step in finding a solution is helping these young people to feel good about themselves. A lot of the young people are insecure. They fall prey to peer pressure because they don't feel good about themselves. They don't love themselves for one reason or another.

156 554 Black youth need positive role models. When you look at the television or read the newspapers, or the history books, blacks are rarely shown in a positive light. As a result many of the young people feel that blacks have not made any significant contribution to America. That causes them to feel negatively about themselves and about their ancestors.

156 554 871 (177) I attended a segregated elementary school and a segregated high school on Johns Island. My childhood dream was to become a teacher. My black teachers were my role models and I always looked up to them. These people worked extremely hard with the boys and girls on Johns Island—giving us lots of support and encouragement. They cared enough about us to go the extra mile in spite of the limited resources that were given to black schools at that time.

The most important influence in my life was my mother, Ms. Wilhelmina Mackey, who died this year. My mother wanted her children to be educated and to "make something" of themselves. She was a stern disciplinarian. She took a no-nonsense approach to education and social behavior.

(177) Because of the Jim Crow laws of the South, and because of extenuating circumstances, she did not have the opportunity to get a high school education. She went only as far as the eighth grade, but she was a smart woman. She worked hard to have her children educated. And she also saw to it that God and religion played a very important role in our lives. My mother's strong desire to see us succeed helped me to develop self-discipline at an early age.

156 I would urge young people today to develop self-discipline in all aspects of life. They need the initiative to move ahead and do those things that should be done.

871 At Wesley, we've set up a weekly communitywide tutorial session. The response to that program has been overwhelming. We have people who have specialized in all subjects coming in to work on an individual basis with kids so that they could get the time and the attention they need.

185 I believe that those of us who have been blessed by God, and have been fortunate enough to be successful, have a moral responsibility to help those less fortunate than ourselves—especially the young people. We need to concentrate on working with our youth, because they are our future.

41 Carawan & Carawan B,Z-5 (1959-1988) 1989
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Johns Island

Mr. Gerald Mackey

YOU NEVER KNOW THE NUMBER OF LIVES YOU TOUCH

The employment situation for young people nationwide is extremely frustrating. I work with the division of personnel for the Charleston County School District. We have problems getting black teachers in the school system. For example, Charleston County hired approximately 224 teachers at the beginning of the school year and approximately 21 of the 224 were black. When you look at the racial composition of the district, you have more black than white students. So we have a problem with black teachers and administrators coming into the district. It's one of the reasons why the desegregation suit brought by the Justice Department and others is now going on.

In some schools in the county, we have no black teachers. In some of the larger schools, you might have two or three. There is no equity in student-teacher ratio in terms of black and white. So the kids have very few black role models in terms of teachers. That's a very sad indictment on a system when kids come up from kindergarten through high school and not see a black teacher. Another argument that we make in the county is that blacks are not going into teaching. They're considering other options like science or math, and they're going into the industries. They're studying computer science and engineering and medicine, and they're not going into teaching. But it's going to be sad again for the kids.

I wouldn't trade my experience of being a classroom teacher for anything in the world. You never know the number of lives you touch. Teaching is very rewarding.

Mr. Abraham Jenkins

I THINK THAT'S A STEP IN THE RIGHT DIRECTION

With the Sea Island Health Care Corporation, the Citizens' Committee, the Ministerial Alliance, Johns Island's going to be a better place to live. With the dedication we have now we have turned that exodus of young people leaving the island around. We have seen some engineers and attorneys and professional people coming back home to live. And if they're not living here, they're still making a contribution by coming back periodically, making their presence known, sharing their knowledge, or making a financial contribution. There's much more of that now than there was ten years ago. I think that's a step in the right direction.

5: Nichols L-5 (no date) 1989
NN23 Sea Islanders NN23
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Georgetown

464 island; businessmen and teachers born on the island lived in
484 adjacent mainland communities. On the mainland two subgroups
571 of blacks could be distinguished. An educated elite has owned
554 land for several generations since the Civil War and held
184 important positions in the churches, schools, and--to a limited extent--in government. The majority of mainland blacks, however, do not own land, are poorly educated, and have traveled little. Island residents hold higher social and economic status than this poorer group of mainland blacks, but have been more limited in their occupational choices than
184 the elite group. The social and economic differences between
197 members of the closed community on the river island and the two groups of mainland blacks are reflected in linguistic choices made by the three groups. For comparative purposes,
121 the speech of selected members of the lower mainland group
197 will be compared with that of the island community. The claim will be made that opportunity to participate in social situations in which a given language variety is used is a more important influence on choosing to use that variety than simple contact with its speakers. Members of the lower mainland group retain a higher percentage of creole features in their speech than do island residents, despite the latter group's greater geographic isolation.

6: Smith I,Y-5 (no date) 1989
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796 services as depicted in the literature is still rather accurate and need not be entertained here, except to say that the general patternings of the services and demonstrations of faith via "shouting" has remained as a center of church services.

The Church Structure

794 (793) The Pastor is the head of each church. There may or may not be a pastor "in training" to assist as needed. Under the Pastor is the Elder Council of Deacons. This body is comprised of the oldest male members of the congregations. The Deacons Council, through a committee structure, runs the affairs of the church. Next in the structure are the Elder Mothers, followed by the general congregations. Aside from their committee responsibilities, the Elder Deacons take part in Sunday services. An extremely learned body, the Elders are easily as able in the scriptures as the Pastors. Their learned abilities and oratorical skills are particularly evident during Funeral services. In these services, the Deacons take turns recalling through their eyes the life of the deceased person. Their eulogies delivered by these Soul stirring orators are the highlighted feature of the rites.

The Practice of the Sea Island Religion

791 554 The islander does not simply outgrow religion. On the

771 islands a man's worth is measured by his religious dedica-
•[554 tion. This is so much the case, that the question of out-growing religion, or active versus the inactive participation of the congregation is not a legitimate concern. The practice of weekday religion is more vigorous than the Sunday demonstrations of faith.

Here on the Islands, religion penetrates every aspect of life. It is rare to encounter islanders who are not learned in the scriptures. This includes islanders who be-
771 795 cause of personal conflicts with the church's institutionalized style, no longer attend Sunday services. The blunt of this disagreement is usually focused at the church's social inactivity; they say the church simply is not doing enough.

The Church's Doings

795 794 Before the coming of community action programs, helping neighbors in need was the exclusive role of the church. To some extent, the church is still the most active agent in this regard. Whose analysis shows that congregation members make up the policy making bodies of all the community action programs on the island. It appears, nov that these program resources are available, the church has taken a more indirect role. Rather than continuing the tradition of neighbor helping neighbor, neighbors in need are nov directed to available program resources. When the need is

8: Smith Q-4,5 (no date) 1926
NN23 Sea Islanders NN23
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192 Bob, dat's a regular Baptis' match—'e wunt bow 'e head in none but 'e own house,"—referring to the Close Communion of the Baptists.

802 The ordinals, second, third, etc., are expressed by *two-time, three-time*, etc., or simply by the cardinals, as *two Chucšday, two T'ursday, two place*, the "second Tuesday, Thursday, place."

Proverbs

538 Tek care bettuh mo'nuh baig paa'd'n (To take care is better than to beg pardon), An ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure.

If yo play wid puppy, 'es lick yo face, Familiarity breeds contempt.

Cut finguh 'f'aid axe, A burnt child dreads the fire.

A still calf git de mores' milk.

Long talk ketch run'way nigguh.

Slow walkin' mek quick lickin'.

Yaas, bubbuh, uh haa'kee, but uh yent yeddy (Yes, brother, I hearken but I don't hear, i.e., I hear what you are saying, but I'm not paying any attention to it).

T'ief is bad, but t'ief en' ketch iz de debble (To steal is bad, but to steal and get caught is the devil).

Little axe cut down big tree."

Ef yo ent hab hoss to ride, ride cow, Half a loaf is better than no bread.

'E yent matter 'bout de road, so long as 'e kah yo to de right place.

A good dog fuh ebryt'ing is good fuh nutt'n (Jack of all trades, master of none).

Po' buckra an' dog walk one pat' (The poor man and the dog walk the same path).

Mos' kill bud don't make soup (Most killed bird don't make soup).

A man ain't eny more dan a man (i.e., there's a limit to all things).

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(554) "Mr. Gonzales describes an insignificant-looking darkey, Little Joe Fields, whose only claim to distinction was the fact that he was the father of twin boys. When ridiculed on account of his small size, Joe would swell with importance, grin expansively, and retort: "Kl! Little axe cut down big tree! You see dem two twin, enty? Dem duh *my* own."

9: Parrish B-4,5 (ca.1916-1941) 1942
NN23 Sea Islanders NN23
Georgia
St. Simon's Island

correspondent goes on to tell of the difficulties encountered by the Governor of Kenya in stamping out what we consider crime. "Imprisonment is found to be no deterrent. Nor among the Kikuyu does an ex-convict lose caste in the tribe. After he is released from jail the sacrifice of a single goat puts everything right. A new suit of a white tunic and shorts is thoroughly enjoyed by native prisoners for theft in East Africa. Fines are not always a success because the native, well-fed, housed and clothed at government expense, actually enjoys his term as a vacation."

Our own prison camp in Glynn County formerly offered an example of the same problem. A colored convict whose time was up pleaded with Mr. Higgenbotham—who was the court of last appeal at the camp—to be allowed to stay. A living being hard to get nowadays, he figured he could not provide for himself as well as the county did.[32] But the authorities were firm, and he was obliged to move on. Of course, he knew how to get back if times were too hard. It is the same with us, as in Africa, when it comes to any stigma being attached to a Negro who has served a term in jail or spent time on the chain-gang. Ex-convicts assume the same status in their community as they enjoyed before the county forcibly detained them.

Today the chain-gang is a thing of the past, and our roadsides and drainage ditches are neglected. No one need tell me that prison walls and ball-playing are proper substitutes for the healthy outdoor life that our convicts formerly led. There is a great deal of sentimentality connected with the discouragement of crime, and the abolition of the chain-gang is one of its manifestations. Of course there were abuses, but they also occur within prison walls—only there they are not so readily found out.

Chorus: Drinkin' of the wine—wine—wine
Drinkin' of the wine
O—yes—my Lord.
I oughta bin to Heaven ten thousand years
Drinkin' of the wine.

[32] My corner was for years the favorite resting-place at noon for the convicts when they worked on the island. I saw the substantial rations served them, and it is no wonder the discharged convict felt he could go farther and fare worse. I also observed that the model prisoners were well treated. One day I overheard a guard say very hospitably to one of my Negro singers, who was working for me: "Want to come back?" With a good-humored chuckle, the man replied: "No, thank you." It seems that he had been mixed up in a drinking affair in which a knife had figured. He told me he had run away, but had found the world a hard place to live in—so he had come home, surrendered, and taken his medicine. The guard said he had been a star prisoner.

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ber of tradesmen on a plantation depended upon the size of the slaveholding and the plantation economy of the owner, every planter on St. Helena Island who owned as many as thirty slaves had at least one tradesman, usually a carpenter. Sometimes the planter had a head carpenter and several subordinates. The Trescot house on Barnwell Island near St. Helena, which had just been completed at the outbreak of the Civil War, was built entirely by Trescot's own carpenters, such work as window sashes and panellings being done in Charleston.[14]

The carpenter did the building and repair work of the plantation, and when work was slack at home he was usually hired out to neighboring plantations or to some reliable person in Beaufort or Charleston. For instance, in August, 1841, Miss Mary B. Elliott, of Beaufort, paid $69.50 "to Mrs. Oswald's York for carpenter work."[15] In 1851 H. M. Stuart, of Beaufort, paid Joe $19 for plastering a room and $1.50 for mending a chimney.[16] Thus, some of the plantation tradesmen exercised as many liberties as free Negroes, and they commanded a position of respect among their fellow slaves. Miss Laura M. Towne, a missionary to St. Helena during the Civil War, found Will, a cabinet-maker on one of the Capers plantations, "very discontented because he was ordered to the field, there being no work at his own trade to do." He was able to read and was "very intelligent and self-respecting."[17] Sir Charles Lyell, who visited James Ham-

[14] William Howard Russell, *My Diary North and South*, p. 145. Congressman William Elliott took this house down in 1876, floated it to the town of Beaufort, and erected it just as it had been on Barnwell Island. The house is now owned and occupied by Dr. M. G. Elliott.

[15] Elliott Account Book. [16] Stuart Receipt Book.

[17] *Letters and Diary of Laura M. Towne*, p. 27.

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ilton Couper's Hopeton plantation in 1841, was agreeably surprised to see the rank held there by the black mechanics. "When these mechanics come to consult Mr. Couper on business," he wrote, "their manner of speaking to him is quite as independent as that of English artisans to their employers."[18]

Besides the tradesmen, Edward L. Pierce, in 1862 found on the St. Helena Island plantations among the group of laborers "more intelligent than the average," plowmen, watchmen, and religious leaders. Each plantation also had its stock minder who attended to the breeding and care of the stock; and on the better managed plantations, its poultry minder as well. The stock minder frequently served also as coachman for the overseer's family, while the coachman for the planter's family was usually one of the house servants.

Negroes unable to do a full day's work, "quarter hands," "half hands," and "three-quarter hands," usually performed the house work. For instance, the usual house servants on Henry A. Middleton's Weehaw plantation near Georgetown were "a cook that is not a full task[,] a girl of twelve, a boy of fourteen."[19] An old woman did the gardening for the overseer's family, and an old man attended to the overseer's and the owner's horses and served as coachman for the overseer. The house servants attached to the planter's family went back and forth with the family from the plantation to the summer house.

[18] Lyell, *A Second Visit to the United States*, I, 267.

[19] Henry A. Middleton, Jr., Weehaw Plantation Book. In possession of Langdon Cheves, Charleston, S. C.

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to Beaufort, Charleston, and the North. Some of the St. Helena people were as alert and ambitious as the whites themselves. Charles Ware, of Massachusetts, in 1862 described Charles, the carpenter on Hope plantation, as "a man after my own heart." "He attracted me first by his dignified and respectful demeanor, and by his superior culture. He has a little touch of self-consideration. He, more than any other negro I know, seems to me like a white person."[18]

SOCIAL CLASSES

The Negroes themselves perhaps unconsciously set a premium on a knowledge of "buckra" ways, for they placed in the upper classes of their social scale those who had superior advantages of learning the customs of the dominant race. The "swonga" people were the drivers who took their orders directly from the overseer, the house servants who were intimately associated with the master's and the overseer's families, the mechanics who were permitted to hire their own time from their masters and work in Beaufort or Charleston. To this group also belonged any among them who from superior rank or intelligence acted as their official or self-appointed leaders. The religious leaders and the plantation watchmen were usually "swonga" Negroes, as were also the witch doctors and those who could boast of physical prowess. It is obviously difficult to point out definitely the various gradations in the social classes among the slaves, but in general the drivers and mechanics stood at the head, followed by the house servants, and at the bottom of the scale stood the field hands.

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Edward S. Philbrick was surprised in 1862 to find the St. Helena Negroes so sensitive to social distinctions and "caste feeling." "There is no race in the world," he wrote from Coffin's Point plantation, "with whom a little *state* gives so much power as the African. They have always been accustomed to see men of any power treated as such, and receiving the attention corresponding thereto. They have always seen a white man on a horse, and have got to think it so far a badge of power & caste, that they will hardly lift their hats to a white man on foot. In fact the Negroes themselves, while moving about from one plantation to another always find some old mule to straddle & look down with contempt upon a 'walking nigger.'"[116] Miss Laura M. Towne, a missionary like Philbrick, also observed the Negroes' sensitiveness to class feeling. Upon visiting two Negro women, she was made to understand that they were "both of the colored aristocracy, had lived in the best families, never did any work to speak of, longed for the young ladies and young 'mas'rs' back again, because April was the month they used to come to Beaufort and have such gay times."[117]

SLAVE MARRIAGES

The amount of interference in the domestic life of the slave varied with the opinions and attitudes of the master. A Charleston planter told his English guest, Captain Basil Hall, in 1827, that he made no attempt to regulate the habits and morals of his people except in matters of police. "We don't care what they do when their tasks are over—we lose sight of them till the next day," he said. "The

[116] Port Royal Correspondence, E. S. Philbrick to E. L. Pierce, March 27, 1862.
[117] *Letters and Diary of Laura M. Towne*, p. 14.